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BLYTHING
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.



THE

Annual Report

Of the Medical Officer of Health,
for the year 1925.



GALDERWORTH.

W. E. GALDERWORTH, Printer, Pinner.
1926.

HALESWORTH,

April, 1926.

**To the Chairman and Members of the
BLYTHING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the Year 1925, which is a Survey Report covering the last five years, on the general health and sanitary condition of your District.

The general health has been good on the whole. The number of cases of notifiable infectious diseases was 56, and this figure compares favourably with the past years notifications.

The number of deaths during the year was 237, which makes a death rate of 13.31 per 1,000 of the population compared with the rate of 12.2 for all England.

The births numbered 316, giving a birth rate of 17.19 per 1,000 of the population. Deaths of infants under one year numbered 15, making an infantile mortality rate of 47.46 per 1,000 births.

The following table shows the birth and death rates, also the infantile mortality rate per 1,000, during the last five years :—

Year.	Birth Rate. Per 1,000 of the Population.	Death Rate. Per 1,000 of the Population.	Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 births.
1921	22.5	12.2	75.1
1922	19.5	13.4	63.3
1923	17.6	11.3	44.4
1924	19.28	12.11	54.75
1925	17.19	13.31	47.46

In compiling this Report, I have, as far as possible, endeavoured to carry out the instructions of the Minister of Health with regard to the Reports of Medical Officers of Health.

Trusting it may meet with your approval,

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. AYLEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

Causes of Death at all Ages.

Enteric Fever	...	...	...	nil
Small Pox	...	...	...	nil
Measles	...	...	...	nil
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	nil
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	nil
Diphtheria	...	...	...	1
Influenza	...	...	...	5
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	1
Meningococcal Meningitis	...	...	...	1
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	14
Other Tuberculous diseases	...	...	...	3
Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	...	30
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...	1
Diabetes	...	...	...	3
Cerebral Hæmorrhage, etc.	...	...	...	18
Heart disease	...	...	...	32
Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	...	8
Bronchitis	...	...	...	14
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	9
Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	3
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	...	3
Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	nil
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	...	...	...	5
Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	...	1
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	...	4
Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	nil
Other accidents and diseases of Pregnancy and parturition	...	...	...	nil
Congenital Debility and Malformation, premature birth	...	...	...	6
Suicide	...	...	...	2
Other deaths from violence	...	...	...	7
Other defined diseases	...	...	...	66
Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	nil

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

56 cases were notified during the year against 57 in 1924. They were as follows :

Disease.	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	nil		
Scarlet Fever	19		
Diphtheria	1		1
Enteric Fever	nil		
Puerperal Fever	nil		
Erysipelas	5		
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1		
Encephalitis lethargica	1		
Cerebro Spinal Fever	1		
Tuberculosis	28		

Nursing Arrangements, Hospitals, etc.

Number of midwives practising in the district ... 8

District Nurses for Maternity and General Cases are provided by Local Nursing Associations in the parishes of Wrentham, Wangford, Yoxford, Westleton, Kelsale, Huntingfield, Walpole, Cookley and Linstead.

An Isolation Hospital is maintained in conjunction with the Leiston Urban District Council, where the Council have the use of 6 beds.

General and accident cases needing Hospital treatment are dealt with by the Patrick Stead Hospital, Halesworth, the Southwold Cottage Hospital, and the East Suffolk Hospital at Ipswich.

There are no ambulance facilities for infectious or accident cases in the district. This is a much felt want.

Laboratory Work.

All pathological and bacteriological examinations are undertaken by the County Bacteriologist, Dr. H. M. Cade, Ipswich.

Samples of Drinking Water requiring analysis are submitted to the Public Analyst, Mr. W. Lincoln Sutton Norwich.

Diphtheria anti-toxin and other sera are supplied free for those in poor circumstances.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER. The water supply of the District is mainly from shallow wells; it is generally hard and of fair quality. In the parishes of Cratfield, Linstead Magna, Linstead Parva, Rumburgh, Spexhall, Ubbeston and Westhall, the water is derived from ponds. Care is taken to keep these ponds free from pollution, and the health of the inhabitants of these villages compares favourably with those villages provided with wells.

In part of Reydon water is supplied by the Southwold Water Company. The water is hard, but of good quality, and constant supply.

In the parish of Walberswick where the water supply was found to be unsuitable the Council are conducting negotiations for a suitable supply, and no doubt this will shortly be forthcoming.

RIVERS and STREAMS.—The River Blyth flows through the centre of the District, and has its outlet in the North Sea between Southwold and Walberswick. It is tidal about as far as Blythburgh, but beyond that point cannot now be regarded as navigable; it is joined in its course by many small tributaries. The main source of pollution is from sewage from the Urban District of Halesworth, through which it flows. No part of it is used for supplying drinking water.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.—This is by privies and pail closets, but whenever possible, I recommend the conversion of the former to pail closets. The old-fashioned privy midden can never be anything else but a nuisance and a serious danger to health.

DRAINAGE and SEWERAGE.—No regular system of drainage exists in the District. In the outlying villages slop water is disposed of on the gardens direct, and in the larger villages, drainage is to cesspools and to open sewers and ditches. The cesspools, except in the Parish of Reydon, are cleansed by the occupiers, and the ditches by the Council.

SCAVENGING.—Refuse, with one exception, is disposed of by the inhabitants themselves. Where there are large gardens or allotments, this arrangement works well and I see no objection to the procedure.

In Reydon, the Council have contracted for the removal of house refuse, the cleansing of privies, earth closets and cesspools. This arrangement is under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector and has worked well, and proves extremely beneficial to the inhabitants.

MILK SUPPLY.—A large quantity of milk is produced in the district, the principal portion being sent to London, but large towns in the County are also supplied.

The Cowsheds are regularly inspected, and are generally kept in a satisfactory condition. There are a number of small Cowkeepers whose premises are not altogether suitable, and constant attention is given to these premises to render them as suitable as possible.

BAKEHOUSES.—These are regularly inspected, and although some of the premises are somewhat small, they are generally kept clean.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.—Slaughter-houses are frequently inspected, and have been kept in a satisfactory condition generally. Under the new Rural District Councils (Slaughter-houses) Order 1924, a more adequate control over these premises is secured. The Council have made Bye-laws which will prove invaluable. The new Meat regulations also afford a considerable help in securing a meat supply that is clean and free from disease; the importance of which from a Public Health point of view cannot be too highly appreciated. Unfortunately, owing to this being a large district, and the Slaughter-houses being widely scattered, it is impossible for the Sanitary inspector to give this matter the attention it deserves, and he will only be able to inspect a small number of carcasses immediately after slaughter. A large quantity of unsound meat has been voluntarily surrendered and destroyed.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—The small number of cases occurring during the year is satisfactory, there being nothing in the nature of an epidemic of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria, the cases being well distributed over the whole district.

Most cases are treated at home, but where isolation in the home is impossible, the cases are removed to the Isolation Hospital at Leiston. The accommodation there is limited, only 6 beds being available. No cases were removed to hospital during the year.

On receipt of notification, the premises are visited by myself and the Sanitary Inspector, printed instructions left as to precautions to be taken, disinfectants supplied, sanitary defects noted, and notices served if necessary. At the close of the illness the necessary disinfection is carried out by your Officer.

Several small epidemics of Chicken Pox and Influenza colds occurred, and School closure was adopted as a means of preventing spread.

The number of cases of Small-pox in England increases; the disease is gradually spreading and may at any time take up a virulent form. The ease with which exemption from vaccination can be, and is obtained, is regrettable, and it is an exception rather than the rule for children to be vaccinated. It is to be hoped that the regulations controlling vaccination will be revised so that all the inhabitants of England will be protected against Small-pox.

SCHOOLS.—The Public Elementary Schools in the district are in a generally satisfactory condition.

In all cases affecting the health of children, I have always co-operated with the County Medical Officer, and when necessary School closure has been advised.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.—Myself and the Sanitary Inspector comprise the Public Health Staff. I should like to express my appreciation of the assistance rendered me at all times by the Inspector, who is a capable and experienced Officer. In addition to his ordinary duties, he is Inspector under the Petroleum Acts and the Council's Rent Collector.

HOUSING.

There is still a marked shortage of houses and the general housing conditions are poor, a great many of the cottages being old and of a type quite unsuitable for modern requirements. It is impossible to close houses that are unfit, or to remedy the many cases of overcrowding that exist owing to the absence of alternative accommodation.

The general character of defects found to exist are dampness, defective roofs, absence of rainwater guttering, inadequate light and ventilation to sleeping and living rooms, brick paving and floors uneven, defective and loose plaster on internal walls and ceilings, woodwork of stairs and bedroom floors worn and uneven, external plastering dilapidated, and brickwork in need of pointing.

Informal notices are invariably served on owners and every opportunity is given for them to carry out the necessary work, compulsion only being sought when all other methods have failed.

It is to be hoped that in the near future the cost of building materials will be reduced so that it will be possible for houses to be built that can be let at an economic rent.

Number of new houses erected during the year:—

(a) Total	...	...	...	16
(b) With State assistance under Housing Acts, 1919, 1923 or 1924 :				
(1) By Local Authority	...	...	...	nil
(2) By other bodies or persons	...	...	...	16

1. *Unfit Dwelling Houses.*

INSPECTION.

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	54
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	...	...	...	nil
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	46

2. *Remedy of defects without service of formal notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers.	34
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3. *Action under Statutory Powers.*

A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919.

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|-----|--|--------|-----|
| (1) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | ... | |
| (2) | Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :— | | |
| | (a) by owners | ... .. | nil |
| | (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | | nil |
| (3) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close | | nil |

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

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|-----|--|--------|-----|
| (1) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | | nil |
| (2) | Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice:— | | |
| | (a) by owners | ... .. | nil |
| | (b) by Local Authority in default of owner | ... | nil |

C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning &c., Act, 1909.

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|-----|--|--------|-----|
| (1) | Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders | | nil |
| (2) | Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing orders were made | ... .. | nil |
| (3) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit | ... .. | nil |
| (4) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | ... .. | nil |
| (5) | Number of dwelling-houses demolished in persuance of Demolition Orders | ... .. | nil |

Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report.

HALESWORTH,

March, 1926.

To the Chairman and Members of the—
BLYTHING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit to you, a report on the Sanitary work carried out during the past year in your district.

The total number of inspections made was 1133. Of these, 744 were done by my predecessor during the months of January to July. I commenced my duty with the Council on October 5th.

A general survey is given followed by a classification of the visits made.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE and DISINFECTION. When cases are notified, the houses are visited and inspected as to their fitness; disinfectants are supplied and the printed instructions of your Medical Officer of Health, applicable to the disease, left with the occupier. All rooms used by the patients are thoroughly fumigated with vapour lamps.

WATER SUPPLY. Two samples of drinking water have been taken and forwarded to the Public Analyst for his report, on the recommendation of the Medical Officer of Health.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS and MILKSHOPS. This very important branch of inspection work has not been overlooked and I am pleased to report that 177 visits have been made. There are approximately 120 cowkeepers in the district and the register of them is being revised and corrected. Generally speaking, the cowsheds are kept cleanly; certainly there are some very old sheds in the district, but on the whole the majority are in a good state of repair. Alterations are proceeding in two instances and I anticipate further work in this direction in several more sheds. It is the usual practise in this large area for occupiers to graze their cattle during ten months of the year. This is a commendable feature.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES. During the year occupiers of the 30 registered slaughter houses were supplied with forms of "Notice of Intention to Slaughter," and times have been fixed in 51 instances—covering one week. It is impossible to visit all the premises during slaughtering hours, owing to the extent of the district. However, the best efforts have been used, and during the twelve months under review, 371 visits were paid to slaughtering premises. No prosecutions have been instituted, or recommendations to the Council, against persons for exposing diseased meat for sale. The following quantities of meat were voluntarily surrendered as being unfit for food, on the recommendation of your Sanitary Inspectors:—

Pork	{	4 Carcases and all viscera
		4 Heads
		5 Pairs of lungs
		5 Livers
Beef	{	1 Forequarter and offals
		1 Fore and hind quarter
		2 Heads
		1 Liver and a set of lungs

Tuberculosis, Urticaria, Dropsy and Emaciation were the causes for the various surrenders. Butchers show a readiness to co-operate with the Inspector with regard to diseased meat.

FACTORIES and WORKSHOPS. In this agricultural area the greatest majority of the 99 registered workshops are either blacksmiths, garage proprietors or cycle repairing depots and carpenters. The premises are kept cleanly and no orders were made during the year.

REFUSE REMOVAL. In the parish of Reydon alone, have the Council contracted for the removal of house refuse, the cleaning of privies, earth closets and cess-pools. Any complaints which have arisen from occupiers have received immediate attention, and your Contractor has worked satisfactorily.

HOUSING INSPECTION OF DISTRICT. Houses are frequently inspected for insanitary conditions and defects. Informal notices are sent to owners, asking for works to be executed. Many repairs have been executed and on the whole the cottage property is kept in a fair state of repair. The lath and plaster type of cottage of which only a few exist, certainly presents a problem to the sanitarian, but in view of the marked shortage of dwelling houses, the cottage has to be continually repaired, as no other houses are available. House rents average £5 per annum, and owners are still confronted with the problem of high wages and material costs for housing repairs, unfortunately.

I wish to record the valuable assistance of the M.O.H. and Clerk in the discharge of my many and various duties, for which I tender my gratitude.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

LEONARD J. B. BAKER,
Sanitary Inspector.

The Number of Inspections made during the year in connection with Sanitary Work, etc.

Inspections under Public Health Acts ...	189
Re-visits to ascertain progress of works	183
Infectious Disease Cases	22
Re-visits	10
Rooms Fumigated	25
Inspections of Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	148
Re-visits „ „ „	29
Inspections of Slaughter Houses, Meat Shops and Knackers Yards ...	373
Inspections of Workshops and Bakehouses	21
Inspections under Scavenging Bye-laws	54
Other visits	37
Total Sanitary Inspections	1081
Inspections under Petroleum Acts ...	52
Rent Collection Visits	240
Grand Total	1373

The following Notices have been served under the Public Health Acts.

To repair defective dwelling houses, outbuildings, privies, etc.	107
To cleanse drains, ditches and gullies	
To remove animals and poultry	
To remove accumulations of manure and refuse	
To repair or cleanse Dairies and Cowsheds ...	25
To repair or cleanse Slaughter Houses ...	11

(Signed),

LEONARD J. B. BAKER, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A
Sanitary Inspector.

